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Opening Secret Kennedy Files

■ The cynical tone of Art Pine's article on the secret John F. Kennedy files is hard to stomach ("Film Launches Call to Open Secret J.F.K. Files," Feb. 12). He smugly asserts that I have "bent facts" and "spread misinformation" in my film "JFK" without really bothering to investigate the claims of the film.

His only specific example of my "misinformation" is a quote from a National Archives official saying that the President's brain is not missing from the archives, that they never had possession of it. The truth is the autopsy materials, including the brain, were turned over to the archives in 1966, whereupon it was discovered that several items on the inventory list, including the brain, were missing—they never reached the archives. In "JFK" the Jim Garrison character says ". . . we were told by the government the President's brain had disappeared," totally in keeping with the facts.

While the files may not contain any "smoking gun," they will undoubtedly give researchers new material to study and fill in some of the many missing pieces in the assassination puzzle.

Moreover, the records of the House Select Committee on Assassinations also include the committee's inquiry into the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., another national tragedy that has only received the most cursory of investigations but one that is considered by many scholars as solvable because the accused, James Earl Ray, is still alive.

There is no reason why the American public should tolerate unexplained political assassinations with the casual information from the government that if we wait 50 or 75 years, we might find a more satisfying answer.

And there is no reason why the media should be so cynical about efforts to seek the truth.

Let's use the J.F.K. case as a starting point for making the federal government accountable to the people again. We didn't get to the bottom of Watergate—only 40 hours of the 1,600 hours of tapes have been released—or to the bottom of Iran-Contra—the convictions of Oliver North and Richard Secord were overturned. We have to get these files out and keep the pressure on the government to trust us with our own true history.

OLIVER STONE
Santa Monica

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